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Releases

BC Unions Oppose Attack on Bargaining Rights

Vancouver, BC - An emergency meeting of the B.C. Federation of Labour tonight issued a statement calling for the Provincial and Federal governments to rescind threats to force truckers back to work through back-to-work legislation and license suspensions.

The statement also called for solidarity with Unifor in their attempt to negotiate a collective agreement to ensure Port drivers are paid fairly and can earn a reasonable living servicing Canada’s largest Port.

Unifor has made an offer, signed by union representatives, to end the dispute and return to work with a new collective agreement.

More than 1,000 truck drivers have seen no increase in rates since the last strike nine years ago which lasted 47 days. In many cases undercutting by employers has meant that drivers are actually earning less today than they were in 2005.

“We are calling for a mass demonstration Friday, March 21st at 12:00 pm noon at Canada Place in downtown Vancouver,” said Jim Sinclair, President of the B.C. Federation of Labour. “It is outrageous that governments are willing to destroy the livelihoods of these drivers by banning them from working at the Port forever. Truckers are simply standing up, legally, for the right to make a decent living.”

Sinclair said labour peace comes from negotiations not legislation.

“There is a solution. It is tried and true. Sit down with Unifor and negotiate a new collective agreement,” the statement said. “Pay truckers properly, provide real enforcement of the rates and ensure waiting times are kept to a minimum.”